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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5175th meeting of the Security Council, held on 4 May 2005, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls all its previous resolutions on Lebanon, in particular resolutions 1559 (2004), 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), resolution 520 (1982) and resolution 1583 (2005) of 28 January 2005 as well as the statements of its President on the situation in Lebanon, in particular the statement of 18 June 2000 (S/PRST/2000/21) and of 19 October 2004 (S/PRST/2004/36).

"The Security Council reiterates its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders and under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon.

"The Security Council welcomes the First semi-annual Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council of 26 April 2005 (S/2005/272) on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

"The Security Council welcomes also that the parties concerned have made significant and noticeable progress towards implementing some of the provisions contained in resolution 1559 (2004), while expressing concern at the determination of the Secretary-General that there has been no progress on the implementation of other provisions of the resolution, in particular the disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militia and the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory, and that the requirements of the resolution have not yet been met.

"The Security Council reiterates its call for the full implementation of all requirements of resolution 1559 (2004), and calls upon all concerned parties to cooperate fully with the Security Council and the Secretary-General to achieve this goal.

"The Security Council acknowledges the letter of 26 April 2005 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Secretary-General stating that Syria has completed the full withdrawal of its forces, military assets and the intelligence apparatus from Lebanon.

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"The Security Council calls upon the Government of Syria and the Government of Lebanon to extend their full cooperation to the United Nations verification team dispatched by the Secretary-General with their agreement to verify whether there has been full and complete withdrawal, and looks forward to his report.

"The Security Council acknowledges that the full and complete Syrian withdrawal would represent a significant and important step towards Lebanon's full political independence and full exercise of its sovereignty that is the ultimate goal of resolution 1559 (2004), thus opening a new chapter in Lebanese history.

"The Security Council welcomes the deployment of Lebanese Armed Forces to positions vacated by Syrian forces and the Government of Lebanon's assumption of responsibility for these areas and calls for the deployment of additional Lebanese Armed Forces throughout the south of the country.

"The Security Council urges all concerned parties to do their utmost to safeguard Lebanon's stability and national unity and underlines the importance of national dialogue among all Lebanese political forces in this regard.

"The Security Council commends the Lebanese people for the dignified manner in which they have expressed their views and for their commitment to a peaceful and democratic process, and stresses that the Lebanese people must be allowed to decide the future of their country free of violence and intimidation. It condemns in this context the recent terrorist acts in Lebanon that have resulted in several deaths and injuries, and calls for their perpetrators to be brought to justice.

"The Security Council welcomes the decision of the Lebanese Government to conduct elections beginning on 29 May 2005, and underlines the importance that such elections be held according to schedule. The Security Council shares the opinion of the Secretary-General that a delay in holding the parliamentary elections would contribute to exacerbating further the political divisions in Lebanon and threaten the security, stability and prosperity of the country. The Council underlines that free and credible elections held without foreign interference or influence would be another central indication of the political independence and sovereignty of Lebanon.

"The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General and the Lebanese Government to reach arrangements for international assistance, including United Nations assistance, to ensure that such elections are conducted in a free and credible manner, in particular through inviting international governmental and/or non-governmental electoral observers to monitor the electoral process. The Council urges Member States to extend assistance accordingly.

"The Security Council commends the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy for their relentless efforts and dedication to facilitate and assist the parties in the implementation of all provisions of resolution 1559 (2004), and requests that they continue their work in this regard.

"The Security Council shares the view that the full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) would contribute positively to the situation in the Middle East in general."